

aircraft that have been stolen, robbed, embezzled, or appropriated and taken to Guatemala.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Treaty, with Annexes and a related exchange of notes, and give its advice and consent to ratification.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
August 31, 1998.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 1.

Remarks at First Day of School Festivities in Moscow, Russia

September 1, 1998

Thank you all very much. I am delighted to be here not only with my wife, who has worked for better education in our country for many years, but with the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Commerce, our American Ambassador here, and five Members of our Congress. I thank all of them for being here. We are delighted to join you on this day.

I would also like to thank Vice Mayor Shanstev and Mr. Muzykantskiy from the Moscow City School Board for joining us. I would like to thank your principal, Ms. Gorachkova. And most of all, I want to thank these fine students, Konstantine Sokolov and Valentina Smirnova. I think they did a fine job, and you should give them applause. You should be very proud of them. [Applause]

Now, in the spirit of the day, even though Konstantine's English is very good, I thought I should try to say something in Russian, like *privet* [Hello]. How's that, is that good? [Applause] Or *S novym uchebnym godom* [Happy New School Year]. Is that good? [Applause]

In America this is also the first day of school for many students. I understand that some of you have studied in America. I hope more of you will do so in the future, and I hope more Americans will come here to study. And in the meantime, perhaps more and more of you can meet on the Internet.

I know that Russian students love to read and are proud of your country's great writers. A teacher here in Moscow asked her first-grade class why they thought reading was important. One girl stood up and answered, "You can read any book. You can read Pushkin." No one in the first grade in my country is reading Pushkin. [Laughter] Now, another student answered the same question in a different way. He said, "If you can read, you can read a fax." [Laughter]

So whether you want to be a business person reading a fax, a writer, or a teacher, or pursue any other career in the modern world, a good school will help you get there. In a world where people are working closer and closer together, a good school with its languages and its learning about other countries is very important. Because more and more of our jobs and lives depend on computers and technology, more and more of us have to read well, do mathematics, and know other subjects good schools teach.

In the past, America and Russia too often used our knowledge in opposition to each other. But things are very different now. Today we use what we know to work together for new jobs, better health care, a cleaner environment, the exploration of space, the exchange of ideas, art, music, videos. Our countries are becoming partners, and more and more of our people are becoming friends.

Your country is going through some difficult changes right now, and I know things aren't always easy for a lot of people. But I also know that in times of crisis the Russian people have always risen to the occasion with courage and determination.

The challenges of this new global economy and society are great, but so are the rewards. For those who have good schools, like this one, with teachers and parents who work hard to help children learn, and with that learning and the new freedom you have in Russia, all of you will be ready for that future, and you will do very well.

So I say to all the students here, learn as much as you can about as many subjects as you can and about other people. And imagine what you would like to see happen in the future, for yourselves, your nation, and the world. And always keep those dreams with

you, for in the new century you will be able to live those dreams.

Thank you. *Spacibo*.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:25 p.m. in the auditorium at Elementary School #19. In his remarks, he referred to Vice Mayor Valery Pavlovich Shanstev of Moscow; Galina Bezrodnaya, principal, Elementary School #19; and students Konstantine Sokolov and Valentina Smirnova, who spoke at the festivities and presented gifts to the President and Mrs. Clinton.

Remarks to Future Russian Leaders in Moscow

September 1, 1998

Thank you very much. First I'd like to thank Maxim Safonov for that fine introduction and for his very encouraging remarks. Rector Torpoulov, Minister Primakov, to all the members of the American delegation. We have Secretary of State Albright, Secretary of Commerce Daley, Secretary of Energy Richardson, National Security Adviser Berger, our Ambassador, Jim Collins, and five distinguished Members of the United States Congress here: Senator Domenici; Senator Bingaman; Representatives Hoyer, King, and Deutsch.

I think their presence here should speak louder than any words I could say that America considers our relationship with Russia to be important. It is a relationship of friendship, of mutual responsibility, and of commitment to the future. We are all honored to be here today, and we thank you for your welcome.

On this first day of school across both our countries, students are resuming their studies, including their study of history. At this critical, surely historic, moment, let me start with a few words about what I believe the past can teach us as we and, especially, as the Russian people face the challenges of the present and the future.

Two hundred and twenty-two years ago, we Americans declared our freedom from the tyranny of King George of England. We set out to govern ourselves. The road has not often—or certainly not always—been easy. First, we fought a very long war for independence. Then it took more than 10 years

to devise a Constitution that worked. Then in 1814, we went to war with England again. They invaded our Capital City and burned the President's house, the White House. Then in 1861, we began our bloodiest war ever, a civil war, fought over the conflicts of slavery. It almost divided our country forever, but instead we were reunited, and we abolished slavery.

In the 1930's, before World War II, our country sank into an enormous depression with 25 percent of our people unemployed and more than one-third of our people living in poverty. Well, you know the rest. We were allies in World War II, and after World War II we were adversaries. But it was a time of great prosperity for the American people, even though there were tense and difficult moments in the last 50 years.

The larger point I want to make, as Russia goes through this time of extreme difficulty, is that over the life of our democracy we have had many intense, even bitter, debates about what are the proper relations between people of different races or religions or backgrounds, over the gap between rich and poor, over crime and punishment, even over war and peace. We Americans have fought and argued with each other, as we do even today, but we have preserved our freedom by remembering the fundamental values enshrined in our Constitution and our Declaration of Independence, by continuing to respect the dignity of every man, woman, and child, to tolerate those with different ideas and beliefs than our own, to demand equality of opportunity, to give everyone a chance to make the most of his or her life.

Russia's great ally in World War II, our President, Franklin Roosevelt, said that democracy is a never-ending seeking for better things. For Americans, that means, in good times and bad, we seek to widen the circle of opportunity, to deepen the meaning of our freedom, to build a stronger national community.

Now, what does all that got to do with Russia in 1998? Your history is much longer than ours and so rich with accomplishment, from military victories over Napoleon and Hitler to the literary achievements of Pushkin, Tolstoy, Chekhov, Pasternak, and so many others, to great achievements in art, music,